



Ergonomics Policy

Number: J-19

Revision: 0

Effective Date:
09-21-2009

Pages: 2

1.0 Policy/Procedure

Ergonomics is the science of fitting the job to the worker. When there is a mismatch between the physical requirements of the job and the physical capability of the worker, musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) can result. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are a category of injuries that affect the body's muscles, bones, ligaments, tendons, and nerves. Where feasible, the following MSD risk factors should be avoided: repetition and inadequate work/rest scheduling, forceful exertions, awkward and extreme positions of the body and sustained or static positioning of the body. Be sure to report to your supervisor any existing discomforts that last more than a week. If you and your supervisor are unable to identify the source or find a solution, contact the Risk Management Specialist for assistance.

As a County employee, you are in the best position to evaluate the tasks you do each day whether it is computer data entry, electrical work, or driving. The tips provided below are intended to provide you with the information and basic tools necessary to assess and correct your own job.

Computer Workstations

Here are some suggestions for setting up your workstation properly:

- Sit with your lower back against the chair, your upper legs parallel to the floor and your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest.
- Adjust your table and chair so that your elbows are bent at right angles and your forearms are approximately parallel to the floor.
- Keep your wrist straight while performing keying functions.
- Do not allow your wrist to rest on any surfaces while performing keying functions.
- Place your mouse (or other pointing device) on a surface close to and at the same height as your keyboard.
- Position your monitor directly in front of you, approximately at arms length away, with the top of the screen at or slightly below eye level. Tip the monitor back at an angle similar to that used when reading a book.
- Use a document holder to position work at eye level and close to the screen.
- Adjust your lighting and monitor to prevent glare or use an antiglare filter.

- When performing tasks involving repetitive motions or awkward positions, take periodic stretching breaks or alternate with other tasks.

Employees shall follow these guidelines:

- If a repetitive job is awkward, try to find a better way to accomplish it.
- When using vibrating tools, try to insulate the vibration from your hands with gloves, padding, etc.
- Keep your wrist in a neutral position as much as possible, *not bent or twisted*.
- Use your whole hand to grasp objects, *not just your thumb and index finger*.
- Alternate easy and hard tasks that require the use of your hands.
- Give your hand and wrist time to recover after forceful movements.
- Don't carry heavy objects for long periods. Use jacks, carts, dollies, etc. whenever possible.
- Increase the diameter of the handles of tools and equipment with tape, foam or other materials to help reduce the force of your grip and to spread the pressure more evenly over the hand.
- Keep your hands warm to promote circulation.